AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A method for maintaining at least one response by an administrator in a system for autonomously processing requests, comprising the steps of:

providing a template to the administrator, wherein the template includes at least one field to elicit information from the ~~administrator,~~ administrator;

receiving information from the administrator into the ~~template, and~~ template;

making the information accessible to a rules-based program for use in providing the at least one response in reply to a request from a user, wherein the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program saves the information as part of the template into rules, and wherein the step of saving the information into rules includes the steps of:

retrieving rules,

for each rule retrieved, determining whether the rule needs information,

if the rule needs information, retrieving the information from a corresponding field in the template and inserting the information into the rule, wherein the step of determining whether the rule needs information includes determining if a response layer or a logic layer needs information by identifying the presence of a signifier in the response layer or the logic layer, respectively, and

if the response layer needs information, retrieving the information from a corresponding field in the template and inserting the information into the response layer; and

if the logic layer needs information, retrieving the information from a corresponding field in the template and inserting the information into the logic layer.

Claims 2-4 (Cancelled)

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim [[4]] 41, wherein the step of determining whether the rule needs information includes the steps of:

determining whether a response layer needs information, and

if the response layer needs information, retrieving the information from a corresponding field in the template and inserting the information into the response layer.

Claim 6 (Original): The method according to claim 5, wherein the step of determining whether the rule needs information includes the steps of:

determining whether a logic layer needs information, and

if the logic layer needs information, retrieving the information from a corresponding field in the template and inserting the information into the logic layer.

Claim 7 (Cancelled)

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim [[5]] 41, wherein the signifier is a tag in a text string.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim [[5]] 41, wherein the signifier is an instruction embedded in a text string.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim [[5]] 41, wherein the signifier is a code.

Claims 11-12 (Cancelled)

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim [[12]] 1, wherein the signifier is a tag in a text string.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim [[12]] 1, wherein the signifier is an instruction embedded in a text string.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim [[12]] 1, wherein the signifier is a code.

Claims 16-17 (Cancelled)

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim [[17]] 1, wherein the signifier is a tag in a text string.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim [[17]] 1, wherein the signifier is an instruction embedded in a text string.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim [[17]] 1, wherein the signifier is a code.

Claim 21 (Cancelled)

Claim 22 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim [[3]] 1, wherein the step of retrieving rules retrieves all of the rules in a template information script.

Claim 23 (Original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program is accomplished by receiving a manual command from a user.

Claim 24 (Original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program is accomplished automatically upon the occurrence of a predefined event.

Claim 25 (Original): The method according to claim 24, wherein the predefined event is closing of the template.

Claim 26 (Original): The method according to claim 24, wherein the predefined event is passage of a predetermined amount of time.

Claim 27 (Original): The method according to claim 24, wherein the predefined event is activation of a save function by the administrator.

Claim 28 (Original): The method according to claim 1, further including the step of enabling the administrator to edit the information.

Claim 29 (Original): The method according to claim 28, wherein the step of enabling the administrator to edit the information includes the steps of:

retrieving the information,

posting the information in at least one appropriate field in the template,

receiving edited information from the administrator into the template, and

making the edited information accessible to the rules-based program for use in providing the at least one response in reply to a request from the user.

Claim 30 (Original): The method according to claim 29, wherein:

the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program saves the information as part of the template, and

the step of retrieving the information includes the step of restoring the information to the at least one field.

Claim 31 (Original): The method according to claim 29, wherein:

the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program saves the information as structured data, and

the step of retrieving the information includes the steps of, for at least one of the at least one field in the template:

retrieving instructions indicating where the information is stored, and

executing the instructions to retrieve the information.

Claim 32 (Original): The method according to claim 29, wherein:

the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program saves the information into rules, and

the step of retrieving the information includes the steps of, for at least one of the at least one field in the template:

retrieving instructions indicating where the information is stored, and

executing the instructions to retrieve the information.

Claim 33 (Original): The method according to claim 29, wherein:

the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program saves the information into rules, and

the step of retrieving the information includes the steps of, for each rule used:

determining whether the rule includes a signifier, and

if a signifier is included, executing instructions from the signifier to retrieve the information associated with the rule.

Claim 34 (Original): The method according to claim 29, wherein:

the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program saves the information into rules, and

the step of retrieving the information includes the steps of, for each rule used:

determining whether the rule includes a signifier, and

if a signifier is included, retrieving the information tagged in the rule.

Claim 35 (Currently Amended): A computer based system that processes inputs entered by a user and provides at least one response that is maintained by an administrator, comprising:

an interface configured to receive information from the administrator; ~~and~~

a template accessible to the administrator, wherein the template includes at least one field to elicit information from the administrator;

an engine configured to:

make the information accessible to a rules-based program that provides the at least one response in reply to the inputs from the user;

save the information as part of the template into rules;

retrieve the rules;

for each rule retrieved, determine whether the rule needs information;

retrieve the information from a corresponding field in the template and insert the information into the rule if the rule needs information;

determine if a response layer or a logic layer needs information by identifying the presence of a signifier in the response layer or the logic layer, respectively; and

if the response layer needs information, retrieve the information from a corresponding field in the template and insert the information into the response layer; and

if the logic layer needs information, retrieve the information from a corresponding field in the template and insert the information into the logic layer.

Claims 36-39 (Cancelled)

Claim 40 (Original): The computer based system according to claim 35, further including an editor adapted to access the information and enable the administrator to edit the information.

Claim 41 (New): A method for maintaining at least one response by an administrator in a system for autonomously processing requests, comprising the steps of:

providing a template to the administrator, wherein the template includes at least one field to elicit information from the administrator;

receiving information from the administrator into the template;

making the information accessible to a rules-based program for use in providing the at least one response in reply to a request from a user, wherein the step of making the information accessible to the rules-based program saves the information as part of the template into rules,

retrieving rules,

for each rule retrieved, determining whether the rule needs information,

if the rule needs information, retrieving the information from a corresponding field in the template and inserting the information into the rule, wherein the step of determining whether the rule needs information includes determining whether an input recognizer needs information by identifying the presence of a signifier, and

if the input recognizer needs information, retrieving the information from a corresponding field in the template and inserting the information into the input recognizer.